

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA**

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:5262

ANSWERED ON:28.08.2001

REGULATING THE QUANTITY OF GENETICALLY MODIFIED FOODS

GADDE RAMAMOCHAN;M.V.V.S MURTHI;SHIVAJI MANE

Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government have embarked on a major exercise to deal with the safety issues associated with the genetically modified foods;
- (b) if so, the details in this regard;
- (c) whether it is a fact that there is hardly any expertise or infrastructure available in the country to regulate the quality of these products;
- (d) if so, the details in this regard; and
- (e) the further steps taken by Government in this regard ?

Answer

MINISTER OF STATE FOR SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI BACHI SINGH RAWAT)

(a) & (b) : Yes, Sir. Under the Indian Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 and Rules 1989, all genetically modified foods are to be assessed for their safety, before they are permitted for commercial release in the country. The `Recombinant DNA Safety Guidelines` were formulated in 1990 and subsequently these were revised in 1994 and in 1998. The guidelines incorporate the testing requirements of genetically modified food materials to assess their adverse effects, if any, in human and animals. A three-tier mechanism for biosafety is under implementation. There are 145 Institutional Biosafety Committees, Review Committee on Genetic Manipulation and Genetic Engineering Approval Committee to monitor, evaluate and recommend various proposals. Government of India has not yet accorded approval for commercial release of any genetically modified food in the country.

(c),(d) & (e): Genetically modified food is considered as a novel food the world over. Expertise is gradually getting generated in developed and developing countries. Indian expertise is being strengthened continuously along with creation of state of the art infrastructure for the past one decade. A Transgenic Containment Facility has been set up at National Bureau of Plant Genetic Resources, New Delhi. Research projects have been formulated on development of analytical methods for testing of genetically modified foods and products derived therefrom.